

Chapter No. 2131

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 554***

Originated in Senate

Jim Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 554

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE JUDICIAL, PUBLIC AND MILITARY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP OF FORMER MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE ROY NOBLE LEE.

WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we learned of the passing of former Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Noble Lee at the age of 99. Chief Justice Lee served 16 years on the Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, Justice Lee came from a family of judges. He and his father, Percy Mercer Lee, are the only father and son ever to serve as Chief Justices of the Mississippi Supreme Court. Percy Mercer Lee served on the Supreme Court from 1950-1965. Roy Noble Lee is the brother of Senior Judge Tom S. Lee of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, former Governor Cliff Finch appointed Lee to a vacancy on the Supreme Court on March 8, 1976. Justice Lee was elected to a full term on the court later that year, and was reelected in 1984. He became Chief Justice on October 1, 1987,

and retired at the end of his term on January 4, 1993, after 16 years of service; and

WHEREAS, Justice Lee's public service career spanned 50 years. From 1942-1944, he worked as an F.B.I. agent. He joined the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1944, saw battle in the South Pacific, and was honorably discharged May 4, 1946. He followed in his father's footsteps as District Attorney and Circuit Judge. From 1951 to January 1964, he was District Attorney for the 8th Judicial District. He served as Circuit Judge from the same district from January 1, 1975, to March 8, 1976; and

WHEREAS, Roy Noble Lee was born on October 19, 1915, in Madison County, Mississippi. He graduated from Mississippi College in 1938, and in 1939 earned an LL.B. degree from Cumberland University School of Law. He was admitted to The Mississippi Bar in 1939; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Bill Waller, Jr., said Chief Justice Lee's impact on the judicial branch of government was enormous. Some of the most significant advancements for the judicial branch of government during the 20th Century were implemented under his leadership. He gave leadership to the enactment of legislation that created the Administrative Office of Courts and the Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals, as he predicted, has been an excellent solution to allow timely disposition of cases and eliminate the backlog that had long plagued the Appellate Court. The Court of Appeals began hearing cases in January 1995. The

Intermediate Appellate Court hears cases assigned by the Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, Judge Lee wrote eloquently of that love of the outdoors in a 1982 Supreme Court Opinion that rejected a challenge by a group of hunters to a Mississippi Commission on Wildlife Conservation rule that prohibited use of dogs in deer hunting in parts of the state. Justice Lee's often quoted passage from the case known as Strong v. Bostick says, "Many men, including this writer, feel that a person who has never seen squirrels jump from limb to limb in the deep swamp on a frosty fall morning; or has never heard a wild turkey gobble in April or seen him strut during mating season; or has never watched a deer bound through the woods and fields, or heard a pack of hounds run a fox, or tree a coon (raccoon); or has never hunted the rabbit, or flushed a covey of quail ahead of a pointed bird dog; or has never angled for bass or caught bream on a light line and rod, or taken catfish from a trotline and limb hook; has never lived. Present generations owe posterity the obligation to protect and conserve wildlife, a valuable and essential natural resource, in order that future generations may have game and fish for their enjoyment, pleasure and benefit"; and


WHEREAS, Justice Lee served as a leader and mentor and consistently lectured on professional standards of the practice, including ethics, integrity, civility, courtesy and adherence to

the Golden Rule. His life honored both The Mississippi Bar and this Great State that he loved and served:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the loss and pay tribute to the judicial public and military service and leadership of former Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Noble Lee, and extend to his surviving family the condolences of the Mississippi Legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of Chief Justice Lee, the Clerk of the Mississippi Supreme Court, the Executive Director of The Mississippi Bar, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 29, 2015



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 10, 2015



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES